Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1663 - June 26 2009

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1663 with a release date of Friday, June 26th, 2009 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a QST. The FCC says no to a petition to regulate the accuracy of signal reports; some new Cycle 24 spots appear on the sun and a new Mode B record on the aging AO7 ham radio satellite. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1663 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RADIO LAW: THE FCC SAYS ANY SIGNAL REPORT IS A GOOD SIGNAL REPORT

Hams can continue to give any signal reports that they please. This as the FCC denies a petition filed by a Texas ham that sought to regulate the way signal reports are given in the Amateur service, especially during contests. Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, has the details:

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The FCC has acted very quickly on a petition filed this past May 6, by Jack Najork, W5FG, of Hubbard, Texas, concerning signal reports transmitted by amateur stations that are participating in contests. Specifically, Najork had request that the Commission sanction the American Radio Relay League for not taking any action to prohibit or discourage what he termed as "false 5-9 blanket reporting."

In the petition, Najork stated that contest signal reports have become -- and we quote "wholesale liar's exchanges." He also expressed the concern that the ARRL has -- and again we quote -- "targeted newly licensed radio amateurs with articles in QST to insure they learned and followed this sham reporting system."

But in its almost record-setting dismissal of the Najork petition, the FCC flatly stated that the way in which hams exchange signal reports is of no interest or concern to the regulatory agency. In regard to the message exchanged between stations in contests, the FCC said that these are specified by the various contest sponsors and generally consists of a call sign and a signal report. As to hams giving other hams inaccurate signal reports, here the FCC notes that there is no rule in Part 97 that requires a station to transmit a report of the signal received. Nor is there one that specifies the standard for reporting signal quality.

In the end the Commission said that it does not regulate amateur contests. Rather, they are self-administered by the amateur community. Based on this, the FCC has dismissed Najork petition and has told him that his concerns should be directed to the various contest sponsors.

Just how Najork might accomplish this is a good question. This is because the majority of ham radio contests are sponsored by individuals

or groups in other nations. As such, they are not subject to the same rules as those radio amateurs whose licenses have been issued by the United states FCC.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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And before you ask, this is not some sort of belated April Fool's joke. The petition had been assigned as Docket number DA No. 09-1378 by the FCC. You can read the entire dismissal order for yourself at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-09-1378A1.doc (FCC)

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SOLAR CYCLE 24: NEW SUNSPOT GROUP EMERGES

Some possible good news on the propagation and maybe the D-X front as well. Thomas Giella, NZ4O, reports that on Monday, June 22nd, a new solar cycle 24 sunspot group emerged in the South-West quadrant of the Sun. Also that NOAA was expected to assign it the designation 11023 with a beta magnetic signature.

Tom, who lives in Lakeland, Florida, notes that sun watchers have seen four solar cycle 24 sunspot groups this month and six in the past 30 days. He adds that it appears as if solar cycle 24 has finally come alive.

And in what may be related news, word on the VHF Reflector that the 6 meter band has been open in various parts of the world with skip contacts of several hundred to more than a thousand miles. These reports seem to coincide with the emergence of the new sunspot group being reported by NZ4O, but whether or not there is any direct connection between the two events is unknown. (Various Sources)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AO-7 MODE B 7000 KM QSO RECORD SET

A 7,000 km contact via the aging AO-7 satellite in Mode B has taken place. This as PS8RF in Brazil and makes contact with ON7EQ in Belgium.

The actual distance between the two stations 7622 kilometers which translates into 4736 miles. According to ON7EQ, both stations knew that a theoretical window between their locations only lasts about 1 minute, 30 seconds. Because of this, some careful preparation was required for selection of the optimal window and calculation of Doppler shifts both ways.

In the vend the effective contact was only possible during about 20 seconds. That was just enough time to exchange reports. It was also enough to put PS8RF and ON7EQ into the ham radio satellite record

books. (Southgate)

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RESCUE RADIO: UK RAYNET HAM RADIO NOT INCLUDED IN EMERGENCY PLAN

Ham radio was definitely not on the mind of United Kingdom emergency planners. This, when that nations recent emergency preparedness report was recently made public. Jeramy Boot, G4NJH, is in Nottingham in the U-K, with more:

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The Government's recent Digital Britain report speaks of the importance of resilient communications networks and the need for regular tests of emergency communications systems.

Mention is made of a planned major test in late 2009 to manage and recover from a major loss of network capability.

The RSGB regrets that Government communications planners seem to have completely overlooked the valuable resource that RAYNET can offer in such emergency situations. Unfortunately RAYNET does not seem to be completely integrated into the nation's emergency communications planning.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jeramy Boot, G4NJH, in Nottingham.

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RAYNET can best described as the U-K equivalent of the United States ARES and RACES combined. (GB2RS)

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HAM TECHNOLOGY: W1AW, WA6ZTY TO CONDUCT DUAL-TONE FREQUENCY MEASURING TEST IN JULY

The ARRL's Hiram Percy Maxim Memorial Station, W1AW is joining forces with WA6ZTY on the West Coast to conduct a summer Frequency Measuring Test. The event will take place at 0145 UTC on July 2nd. That's 9:45 p.m. Eastern and 6:45 p.m. Pacific time.

According to Frequency Measuring Test Coordinator Ward Silver, N0AX, the format will be a repeat of the dual-tone test conducted in November 2008. Silver says that the timing glitches that occurred during the November test have been ironed out, so the format will be repeated to give everyone another opportunity to make measurements.

More about the Frequency Measuring Test can be found on line at www.arrl.org/w1aw /fmt. (ARRL)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the W3BN repeater serving Reading, Pennsylvania.

(5 sec pause here)

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RESCUE RADIO: VK BROADCASTER TO ASSIST IN EMCOMM ALERTS

A broadcaster down-under says its going to equip itself to assist in rescue radio operations. This by making itself ready to do local updates when and where they are needed during an emergency. Jim Damron, N8TMW, reports: -- New technology will help the Australian Broadcasting Corporation bring local emergency news coverage directly to communities affected by natural disasters like floods and cyclones. Three fly-in transmitters have been purchased by the company to allow local ABC affiliated stations to set up shop anywhere in Australia.

The units were originally designed for the United States military to use in the Iraq war. They are designed to be set up within an hour and can be powered by a small generator or AC mains power.

Mark Spuurway is the head of transmission services with the ABC. He says that these transmitters will insure that affected communities will be kept informed. -- At airtime its not known how soon these new Australian Broadcasting Company fly-in radio service will be available. (ABC release)

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ENFORCEMENT: FCC REFUSES TO RENEW TEXAS FM BROADCAST LICENSE

A broadcast station has lost its license In a June 22nd Memorandum Opinion and Order, the FCC has dismissed an Application for Renewal of licensee for station KBKH FM in Shamrock, Texas. This after finding that station owner Terry Keith Hammond lacks the basic requisite character qualifications to be and remain a Commission licensee. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, has the rest of the story: -- Back on September 15, 2006, the Commission began a hearing proceeding to determine whether Terry Keith Hammond was qualified to be and remain a licensee. Also, whether his license for Station KBKH FM should be revoked, and whether Hammond's application for renewal of the station's license should be granted.

The case centered around a Hearing Designation order to determine if Terry Keith Hammond made false certifications, misrepresentations, or otherwise demonstrated a lack of candor in applications that he filed with the Commission. Also, whether he willfully and/or repeatedly violated Commission rules governing the operation, location and equipment for Station KBKH FM. Lastly, whether Hammond willfully or repeatedly failed to comply with a Commission rule requiring licensees to provide information concerning matters within the Commission's jurisdiction

The Presiding Judge eventually determined that Hammond received a copy of the Hearing Designation Order but failed to file a written notice of appearance seeking to avail himself of the right to a hearing. Because of this the Judge concluded that Hammond had waived his right to a hearing. He then terminated the hearing proceeding and certified to the Commission the issues in the matter. The Judge also dismissed, with prejudice, the station's renewal application.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in the studio in Los Angeles. -- The FCC says that its actions were taken pursuant to authority delegated to the Enforcement Bureau under Section 0.111(a)(17) of the Commission's rules. At airtime, its not known if Hammond plans to file an appeal. (FCC)

** HAM HAPPENINGS: PAPERS BEING SOLICITED FOR MUD 2009

Technical papers are currently being solicited for publication in the ARRL's Microwave Update 2009 Conference Proceedings. The conference is slated for on Friday, October 23 through Saturday, October 24 in Dallas, Texas, but you do not need to attend the conference nor present your paper to have it published.

Strong preference will be given to original work and to those papers that are written and formatted specifically for publication rather than as a visual presentation aid. The deadline for papers is Monday, August 31, 2008. More information is available on-line at www.microwaveupdate.org (ARRL and MUD)

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HAM RADIO AND THE NET: AMSAT NOW TWEETING ON TWITTER

Get ready for some interesting ham radio in space related tweets. This with the announcement that the Amateur Satellite organization AMSAT is now posting on the Twitter social networking website.

According to Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA, writing on the AMSAT Bulletin Board, the ham radio space agency new Twitter account is twitter.com/AMSAT. He says that the initial tweets will deal mostly with AO-51 and AO-7, but those with interest in other ham radio satellites are welcome to follow.

Glasbrenner, who is AMSAT North America's Vice President for Operations says that the short postings or tweets will deal with items that are deemed as small for publication by the AMSAT News Service or to be sent by e-mail, but of interest to the general ham radio space community. (AMSAT-NA)

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NEW PRODUCT: JETSTREAM INTRODUCES JT220M FOR THE 220 BAND

Its been a long time since a new mobile transceiver for the amateur 222 to 225 MHz band has been announced. Now Jetstream, the company best known for its power supplies and ham station peripherals has introduced the new JT 220 M transceiver.

The JT 220 M is an FM only transceiver that runs 50 Watts out in its high power mode from any of its 99 memory channels or its one programmable call channel. It features a large black on blue LCD display, a backlit DTMF microphone, a time out timer plus both CTCSS and DTS encode and decode built in. There's even an internal tone burst encoder for those rare spots in the world that still use it.

The JT 220 M's newly designed double conversion receiver uses intermediate frequencies of 21.7MHz and 450 kHz to maximize image rejection of unwanted signals. The overall receiver design yields a squelch sensitivity of point one microvolt. In other words, this radio can hear as well as talk. And less we forget, the JT 220 M is computer programmable using an optional cable.

If you have been thinking about getting a radio for 220 but have been looking for something new, the JT 220 M may be the transceiver for you. Judge for yourself on-line at www.jetstream-usa.com/jt220m.shtml (ARNewsline(tm))

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NEW PRODUCTS: NEW CCRADIO 2 COVERS 2 METERS

The recently announced C. Crane CCRadio-2 is not a transceiver but it can receive anything in the 2-meter band Amateur service band. The California based C. Crane Company says it's the first commercial AM/FM radio that provides this type of ham-band monitoring capability, noting that listeners could find emergency information there that could save somebody's life. More about the CCRadio-2 at the C. Crane website. Its at www.ccrane.com   (C. Crane)

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NET NEWS: THE NET COMES FIRST

The results of a survey released on June 18th says that twice as many Americans would rather give up their cell phone or cable TV than their broadband Internet connection. This, even though they're paying more for the high-speed service this year.

The latest findings by the Pew Internet and American Life Project shows broadband adoption jumped to 63 percent of American adults using a high-speed connection at home compared to 57 percent a year ago. The results appear to indicate that the current economic recession has not kept people from subscribing to a home high-speed connection.

Home broadband users paid more for their service this year over last year. The average monthly bill is $39 this year. This is up by over $4 in 2008 when the average monthly fee was $34.50.   (Todays Technology)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: C-NET INTERVIEWS KEVIN MITNICK, N6NHG

Some names in the news. First up is former hacker turned Internet security expert Kevin David Mitnick, N6NHG. In an on-line interview with C-Net News Ellinor Mills, Mitnick explains how ham radio lead him to an interest in the nations telephone system and from there to computer hacking and social engineering. This, so he could get all sorts of information that he personally craved to know and to try to understand.

Mitnick also talks openly about other hackers, about his getting caught, his time spent behind bars and how it all lead him to become one of the good guy hackers. Someone working to keep the nations data systems secure from people like his former self.

It all makes an interesting read, especially for those who might have known, or actually knew N6NHG back in the 1980's and 1990's. The article is on-line at http://news.cnet.com/8301-1009_3-10269348-83.html?part=rss&subj=news&tag=2547-1_3-0-20 (C-Net)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: K6JAT APPOINTED AS PACIFIC DIVISION VICE DIRECTOR

Jim Tiemstra, K6JAT, of Oakland, California, tis the new ARRL Pacific Division Vice Director. This, after being appointed by League Joel Harrison, W5ZN to serve the remainder of the current term of Andy Oppel, N6AJO, who resigned from the post citing family and business reasons.

Tiemstra is a member of the Northern California Contest Club, the Quarter Century Wireless Association and 10-10 International. He will serve as Pacific Division Vice Director through the end of 2010. (ARRL)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: SAN FRANCISCO'S FIRST ATV STATION

And the story of the late Clarence Wolfe, Jr., W6JDI, and his foray into amateur fast scan television in the late 1940's is one of the features in the July issue of Popular Communications magazine.

According to the article by writer Shannon Huniwell, Wolfe signed on with a home built 525 line Iconoscope camera and transmitter about a year and a half before the first San Francisco commercial station began to light up the airwaves. His programming consisted only of a picture of a girl that other pioneering ham television operators dubbed as Gwendolyn.

How W6JDI pulled it all together and got it on the air for less than $500 is an amazing story. It starts on page 73 of the July Popular Communications on newsstands right now. (PopComm)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD: JOE PHILLIPS, K8QOE - S.K.

It is with the deepest of sorrow that we report the passing of our longtime friend Joe Phillips, K8QOE, who died suddenly at his home on Saturday, June 20th. Joe, who since 1998 had been serving as ARRL Ohio Section Manager was not only a devoted ham radio operator and family man, but also a driving force in publicizing the hobby to the world.

First licensed in 1959 as KN9SYL, Phillips first joined the ARRL Field Organization as an Official Emergency Station in 1986. He became a Public Information Officer in 1989 and has served as an Official Observer since 1997. He was elected Ohio Section Manager in 1998.

But titles are only a tiny part of the Joe Phillips story. Rather for many of his 68 years on Earth, Joe was a ham literally out in the trenches of amateur radio. A career as a journalist and a teacher, over the years K8QOE edited six separate ham radio newsletters in Cincinnati before becoming Newsletter Editor for the Ohio Area Repeater Council in 1984. That's a position he held for five years.

In 1986, Phillips organized the first Ohio Repeater Directory and in 1992 he created the Ohio Section Ham Radio Newsletter Contest. He also authored a weekly ham radio newspaper column in the Sunday edition of the Cincinnati Enquirer called "Ham Call" and hosted a similarly named program for cable television also in the Cincinnati area. And for many years he was a fixture at forums he conducted or took part in at the Dayton Hamvention.

In 1994, Joe Phillips was elected to the Greater Cincinnati Amateur Radio Hall of Fame. A year later he was the recipient of the ARRL's McGan Silver Antenna Award. This latter honor is bestowed annually to an ARRL member who demonstrates outstanding public relations success on behalf amateur radio at the local, state or national level. In Joe case, it was all three.

Joe Phillips, K8QOE, is survived by his wife Donna and their three children. A funeral Mass was scheduled for Saturday, June 27th at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church, in Fairfield, Ohio with burial in Youngstown, Ohio.

Needless to say, Joe Phillips, K8QOE, was a very special member of the nations ham radio community. A true contributor to its well being in every sense of the word. He will be missed. (K8JE, N8BV, ARRL, ARNewsline(tm))

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HAM TECHNOLOGY: WA1ZMS TRANS-ATLANTIC BEACON GETS MORE POWER

The WA1ZMS Trans-Atlantic spotting beacon on 144.285 MHz has just had an increase in power. This CW beacon is also GPS locked and the antenna is beaming at 60 degrees from IARU grid locator F M 07 f m. While it has yet to be heard in the British Isles, its owner Brian Justin, WA1ZMS says that given the right conditions, the signal may make it across the pond. More about this experiment is on-line at www.directivesystems.com/WA1ZMS (WA1ZMS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: RS-15 10 METER BEACON STILL OPERATIONAL

The 10 meter beacon on the RS-15 Amateur Radio satellite is still going strong. This, over 14 and a half years since the ham radio satellite was launched.

RS-15 was rode into orbit on December 26th 1994. Its 145 to 29 MHz linear transponder has long since ceased operation, however the 10 meter beacon can still be heard. At least when there is enough power generated to bring it on the air.

It should be noted that most commercial low earth orbit satellites cease operating after a few years. The fact that RS-15 can be heard at all is a reflection on the very high standard of design and construction that is put into every amateur satellite. (AMSAT)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: CELEBRATING THE APOLLO 11 MOON LANDING

A group of radio amateurs are reportedly planning a commemorative event to mark this year's 40th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing. Called 'Echoes of Apollo', the Southgate news says that various activities are planned around the end of June and into July to commemorate this historic event.

As we go to air the organizers are reportedly negotiating with some of the world's largest and most capable amateur radio moon-bounce stations, and some deep space radio facilities. The idea is to network people from various locations using moon-bounce.

Also planned is an HF radio weekend. This, with stations set up near sites that took part in the original support for the Apollo 11 mission. More on this project as details become available. (Southgate)

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ON THE AIR: MUSCATINE IOWA RADIO CLUB TURNS 60

On the air, the Iowa-based Muscatine Amateur Radio Club will be operating Special Event Station W0M from June 15 through June 30. This

is in celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the club. Operations will be on 80, 40 and 10 meters on H-F and locally on 146.910 F-M. QSL with a #10 Self Addressed Stamped Envelope via KC0AQS 1092 Ripley Rd., Muscatine, Iowa. The zipcode is 52761. Logs may be uploaded to Logbook of the World and eQSL sometime after June 30th, but you can only get the certificate through the postal service. (N0LOH)

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ON THE AIR: THE ANTARCTIC IN 2010

And a lot further South, ON7ZM and F5PFP say that they are planning an expedition to Antarctica. One that will probably take place during the Arctic summer of 2011 to 2012.

According to F5PFP, it could be a 6 to 7 week expedition to reach some old bases and refuges which are situated below the Antarctic polar circle. Possible stops include the Loubet coast, the Fallieres coast, Marguerite Bay, and hopefully one accessible island in the Alexander group. Questions go to f5pfp (at) aliceadsl (dot) fr or keep an ear open here on Newsline for more details. (OPDX)

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DX

In DX, listen out for DL5YL, and DL5YM who are currently operating portable HB0 from Liechtenstein. The pair are on from the city of Masescha working in CW on all of the high frequency bands. QSL as directed by the operators. This operation ends on July 2nd.

SQ8X and SV2KBS will activate Easter Island from October 31st through November 15th. A few more operators are being sought for this DXpedition. If you are interested to join please contact stan (dot) sq8x (at) gmail (dot) com

IV3EPO will be active from Malta as 9H3EP through June 29th. Listen for him on 40 through 10 meters mainly using CW. QSL direct or via the bureau to IV3EPO.

F2JD will be operational from the Philippines for the next five months and is hoping to get his DU1 slash G0SHN license extended. He also plans to activate some Islands On The Air locations during his stay. QSL direct or via the bureau to F6AJA.

Lastly, keep an ear open for Madagascar. This as Texas DX Society member W5KDJ comes on the air as 5R8KD from Antananarivo between July 4-17th. His operation will be on 160 through 6 meters using CW and RTTY. Logs will be uploaded to LoTW and eQSL. And an on-line log search will be available. Paper QSL's go via his home callsign.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: A HOOSIER FIELD DAY IN NEW MEXICO

And finally this week, group of Hoosier hams are trekking to New Mexico for a very special Field Day event. Jack Parker, W8ISH, is in Indianapolis, with more:

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Their goal is making contact with as many North American human Life Forms as possible during the two day event.   Five Indy hams and a sixth from the Rocky Mountains are launching their Field Day from a remote mountain top in New Mexico.

Veteran DX'er Mike Koss W9SU and the newly formed Purveyors of Doom will operate from the 86 hundred foot Gallinas Peak in New Mexico. This is near Corona where a UFO reportedly crashed in 1947.

This part of the world isn't alien to Mike Koss. In fact, he has gone where no man, with a ham radio, has never gone before. In July 1997 Mike was traveling through New Mexico on business and was fascinated by the history of Roswell and the 50 year commemoration of the mysterious UFO crash.

Two years later Mike and his brother Bob W9ETA returned to Roswell to operate Field Day from an alleged UFO crash site west of the city. In 2002, the UFO Field Day adventure took off. Three more Hoosiers, including a retired Indianapolis police officer living in Colorado, joined Mike at the crash site.

Their quest for amateur radio contacts and a possible Close Encounter has kept the tradition alive. In 2004 a forest fire in the area forced the trekkers to find a new location for Field Day. They settled for a mountain top near Corona, New Mexico, an area known for UFO activity.

Following a couple of side trips to two epicenters of UFO lore-Roswell, New Mexico and a Nevada site, near area 51,   Mike hatched the idea of combining an interest in UFO's and Amateur radio into a new Field Day group.

This year, using their new call sign of W9UFO, Mike and the Purveyors of Doom radio club,   will be operating 2Alpha, along with a VHF station from the remote grid square of DM74. Any contacts made during Field Day 2009 with these alien Hoosiers, will earn you a novel QSL card that satirizes the governments official denial of UFO's.

Reporting from Indianapolis, this is Jack Parker W8ISH.

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For those who'd like to tune them in, the group be on 14.337 MHz an hour before the start of Field Day at 1700 UTC on Saturday, June 27, renewing its tradition of talking to fellow club members in Indianapolis who couldn't make the trip. But anyone else is welcome to give them a signal report as well. (ARNewsline(tm), W8ISH)

** NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's" only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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